

Earth X First!

Action Update

No. 45 January 1998

30p

There are a thousand hacking at the branches of evil to one who is striking at the root. - Henri David Thoreau.

CLIMATE CRIMINALS

In December Londoners were treated to a radio message about the 'Climate Change Criminals'. The 2 minute pirate piece was broadcast over the swerves of Capital Radio in areas all over 4 central and Greater London. In the style of a 5 live commercial, with a low growl and pling of screaming the message drew attention to the recent Kyoto conference on Global Warming. It went something like this:

"They came from behind closed doors. Their mission, to pull off the most daring heist since the Wall Street crash. Dastardly, Kyoto (the freedom to drive is not negotiable) [the stakes were high. Their profit is our future] (Selling the planet costs jobs.) [They're the Climate Change Criminals] (We're politicians) (and clings down on oil use... is it just a job or near-ecological death?) (The last vest of the oil industry and their vested interests.) (Global warming is a lie.) (Working behind your back to steal your future, to make sure that your children as well as you only breathe turning up the heat on the planet, double playing the greenhouse effect, putting a 121 stop at the end of the earth while they stuff their wallets making sure they'll be the last to suffer.) (You can stop the climate change madness, stop the climate change madness, make your voice heard, make your voice heard."

Speakers Junction on the M6. Get on the A16 heading out of Birmingham towards Lichfield, past Bascoats Pole until the A67 works approx 1.5 miles. For more info: 0911 6391978

M65 OPENING

The new M65 motorway just outside Manchester was finally opened in mid December. The road had been routed throughout its construction, including a year long occupation of the route during 1995.

The opening ceremony was attended by the



Don't mess your back - the A670 to the M65?

BIRMINGHAM NORTHERN RELIEF ROAD

John Pinner has gone motor mad, approving 27 miles of road for MCL (Midland Express Limited), despite the fact that local Labour MPs were elected on the strength of a promise not to go ahead with the road.

The planned dual carriageway will devastate Birmingham's greenbelt, destroying 5551's archaeological and ecological sites, farmland and trees. The public inquiry, concluded that pollution would render unfit the 3 schools adjacent to the road not to be sited in the vicinity.

The local campaign against the road has been going on for 18 years and efforts to find legal loopholes to stop the project continue. Activists have been occupying the proposed site for three months now, building an info centre and workshops. More defenses are on the way.

The M6 is situated in Greenwood, on the A16 between Bascoats Pole and Westland Junction, next to the ARC grand walk. Get the 110 bus from Corporation St in Birmingham city center to Bascoats Pole then walk 1.5 miles north along the A16 to the ARC grand walk on the left. Highway. The ARC can be accessed from the

usual array of councillors, police, security, activists, angry locals and Jack Straw the local MP. The police made two slightly enthusiastic arrests at the beginning of the event and security remained rather upright. Although activists did not disrupt the ceremony they managed to divert all media attention from it, commencing, albeit slightly incoherently on the madness and sheer horror of the new road. The police got over their excited, nervous behaviour after the ceremony had finished and so released the cheerful captives who all went home and drank tea.

PEOPLES' GLOBAL ACTION

At the end of February 600 representatives of peoples movements will meet in Geneva to establish a platform for worldwide action against trade liberalisation - the Peoples' Global Action against "Free" Trade and the WTO (PGAA). This will call for nonviolent civil disobedience and the construction of local alternatives by local people as answers to the action of multilateral institutions, governments and corporations. The first big-scale action will be a wave of protests all over the world parallel to the Second Millennium Conference of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) on May 18-20, 1998.

The meeting in February is being convened by a committee formed by some of the most representative peoples' movements of all continents including peasant movements (like the Brazilian Movimento Sem Terra, the Indian KRRS), indigenous peoples (like the Mexican Zapatistas), the Nigerian Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People, unions and women's organisations.

From Feb 18-21, there will be information and discussions on gender, food production, culture, economics, etc. On Feb 22 there will be a one-day seminar on the WTO, the MAI and trade liberalisation. On Feb 26 there will be co-ordination and planning sessions in small groups. Finally, on Feb 27 there will be a meeting to launch a Europe-wide movement of civil disobedience against "Free" trade.

Contact the web page <http://www.pgaa.org> or send a message to playfair@netscib-wilken.de

ASHTON COURT QUARRY

As part of Bristol's tendering pack a 1000 tonne threat from Ashton Court National Nature Reserve, who now have planning permission to expand their quarry. A long-standing campaign to stop the expansion has so far succeeded in only slightly reducing the proposed loss of park from the original 34 acres planning application.

Having had no joy in discussions with Pioneer's regional management, the quarry campaigners headed up to London, hung a banner off the roof of the Pioneer office, and leafleted staff. The police were called, arriving 45 minutes later in a van, from the police station next door. Security was left spluttering indignantly with the sad news that leafletting about the destruction of public parkland is not a criminal offence in this country and the police did not wish to get involved.

After 3 hours waiting to meet the UK director of Pioneer Aggregates campaigners got bored, discovered the boardroom, and occupied it. Miraculously, the men appeared, and a lively discussion ensued. The implacable face of corporate bureaucracy was however totally removed - as far as Pioneer are concerned, they've got their planning permission, and they don't care about the ethics of it all.

Work on the expansion is expected to start this spring, with a massive earth moving operation to transplant the wild flower meadow from Top Park Field.

Contact 0117 939 1093 or the campaign web page <http://www.go.aps.org/cycling/ashcreek.htm>

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NEWS IN BRIEF

Help is needed to make a street party happen in SW Hertfordshire this summer. The party will draw attention to a disastrous new road scheme. Contact 01923 468134

'McMichael Two Worlds Collide' (directed by Ken Loach), a 32 minute documentary of the infamous case, is out! It uses interviews with witnesses and reconstructions of key moments in court to examine the race issues of the trial as well as the implications for doctors of speech. It is likely that it won't be shown in the UK. Call 01753 681 0832

In December 190 people attended a meeting to see what support could be given to the 3 recently imprisoned editors of Green Anarchist. A support group has been established and will be meeting monthly in Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London (see February issue). The next meeting is Wed 21st January 7pm. Contact 0171 865 8150

The Land is Green is putting together a register of 'unowned land'. Often the only way to tell if land is owned is to do something on it and wait for the legal system to crack into action and produce the deeds. Unowned land could be used for starting new allotments, eco-villages etc. Anyone wanting to help with this initiative contact TLIO c/o 10 Highwood Close, Creighton, Kent, BR6 8HT. Or phone 01846 722016

RJ Dodge Mining is seeking planning permission to push more countryside with an open cast site on the western edge of Newcastle upon Tyne. Contact Citizens' Planning Action Group on 0191 3654597 or 1a armstrong@clpa.co.uk or blagw@clpa.co.uk or 1a@clpa.co.uk

After a year with angels and stars? The Christmas (Marianne James, co-edited a British (anti) book which was the crowning glory of the 1999 Christmas tree in Manchester City Centre and replaced it with a more traditional tree, saying they were outraged at the blasphemous and cynical commercialisation of Christmas

A non-profit making video project is being set up in Bristol. There is a very early stage and ideas include community videos, film documentaries and maybe even a video magazine. Contact 01914 970943 (jogger) joan@cityfilm.co.uk

All charges from events at the Department of Trade and Industry last October have been dropped. Activities had been accused 'on suspicion of burglary' after storming the building during a solidarity action with the Liverpool Dockers

A number of lending materials were reorganised at the Newbury Bypass over Xmas. The road, due for completion in Oct '98, was left a sliding duck as already patchy surface was further reduced

Inspiration, oh divine inspiration, get down your local library and get a print out of www.culturedivergence.com/culturedivergence.com/commands/feedback.html I found it's error reporting

"We want to create a world called Silver, a world which revolves around shopping and driving" said a Shell spokesperson in Nottingham when announcing 400 new garages in 1998 and a greater collaboration with Burger King

BREWERY ROAD IN BURY ST EDMONDS

Local residents in Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk, have set up a camp to stop an access road being built through virtually untouched water meadows to reach Green King Brewery. The brewery has had its planning application granted this January to extend the depot

There has been excellent press coverage and enormous local support for the camp, but they now need help to supplement their land occupation with a more people have had to head back to work after the New Year. The camp has banners and tents but also needs two dwellers should the water meadows flood. Food and firewood stores are currently well stocked, as is the camp. A week or two, or even a day or two, your help would be much appreciated. Contact 01359 249365 or 01354 760813 or The Glad Ashcroft, Watermeadows Delnham Camp, Calfem Road, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk, IP23

DOCKERS SOLIDARITY

Boosting the growing *Red Post* workers' rights alliance, the Manchester Argus shop was targeted before Christmas in solidarity with the sacked Liverpool Dockers

The Dockers support group and EIT activists from the north were occupied and blockaded the city centre store on one of the busiest shopping days of the year. Activists linked themselves with armbands and crested around the store, eventually stopping just inside the doors. A chain lined up on the goods counter and everyone was entertained by brilliant theatre and alternative Dockers-supporting Christmas carols. Festive art first opted for the materials of keeping the store open but letting activists stay but as the impact of a few disgruntled shoppers increased, police action seemed likely and everyone decided to leave when the fire alarm went off.

A protest plan could sound more shop-stopping, but the 'unusual' police soon positioned themselves outside the doors making sure that people knew the shop was still officially open

However, custom was massively reduced, there were few arrests and the fight to put pressure on Mercury Port Authority, through asking Argus to pull out of using the port goes on. Contact 0161 224 4846

FASLANE SOLSTICE SHENANNIGANS

On 22nd December protesters belted traffic guns into Faslane Road bus for 15 hours during the Faslane Peace Camp 'Breach of the Peace' action.

Over 30 people took to the road, locked on, sang, fire danced and chanted. The street party led to a traffic jam several miles long which delayed Strathclyde Constabulary's arrival on the scene for some time!

The action was called to highlight the hypocrisy of New Labour who are going to cut benefits to single parents yet still see fit to spend billions on Trident, the most horrific tool of genocide yet created

Initially the action was more a continuation of the Camp's Solstice Party, but the atmosphere was soon turned by the police mistreatment of the situation. McDi-Police became violent and several protesters were hurt while locked-on as the police attempted to lift them. Only one arrest was made

Some campaigners affected by police are making official complaints, as if anyone saw any concrete taking place, or has photos, police numbers etc, please contact the camp. Contact 01436 820900

E10 HIT AGAIN

The first time has been over on the Leyton Railfod Road (LRR) route in East London. As yet there is no security, although petrolheads have arrived on site

The Leyton Railfod Road is potentially a major development and will pass directly across Walthamstow marshes (two SS1As and a Nature Reserve)

The scheme for the Leyton Railfod Road has been floating around since the East London Assessment Survey, when it was part of a proposed route for the M11 Link Road. In the event, the M11 Link Road is being built down the Roding Valley but over since the 1960s bits of the Lea Valley proposed route keep getting built anyway although of course these are 'only' hide local road schemes"

The Public Inquiry into the Unitary Development Plan was when the Inspector recommended the wholesale deletion of the Leyton Railfod Road scheme as it would 'release suppressed demand' for a major road right up the valley. The Labour and Tory groups on the local council voted to ignore this and John Sumner decided not to override them because the scheme 'did not warrant the intervention of the Secretary of State for the Environment'. Contact 0181 327 9857

MANCHESTER AIRPORT ACTION

Manchester airport again became the target of protests in highlight issues which were debated at the Kyoto climate talks. On 8th December, two airport work place. Twelve people used the latest advances in synchronised ear tube lock-on techniques to block the internal departures area. They surrounded a car equipped to be an anti-bomb being removed off by the police for another hour. They were then mounted out - whilst remaining in perfect formation

Meanwhile 10 people dressed in the traditional white coats and gas masks climbed onto the roof of the airport terminal and unfurled 2 giant banners reading: 'Global warming the final warning' and 'stop aviation growth'. They came down after a few hours and were arrested after suspected criminal damage and non-payment of two airport by-laws. Traffic was delayed and some flights were delayed. Contact 0161 234 8446

INTERNATIONAL CALL FOR SUPPORT

On the 14th of January, Girdler (global) and about 30 men with chainsaws started cutting trees at Glen of the Downs, the first Irish road camp. At the moment they are only cutting away from the camp. People managed to slow them down and as arrests were made for obstructing the chainsaws. The forces of darkness managed to cut by driving quickly up and down the road in cars, causing a few trees at a time

A High Court injunction on ordered Widdow County Council not to tell any trees until Wednesday 21st but also ordered people not to "trespass" on the site

Anyone welcome, especially if you can bring ear muffs, climbing gear etc. Camp mobile +353 85 210 7471, Dublin contact +353 1 4966094 Tree 44, Glen O' the Downs, Kilmonegan, Co. Wicklow

How to Contact the Earth First! Action Update

Post: Earth First! Action Update, Dept 19, 1 Newton Street, Manchester M1 1RW. Telephone: 0161 324 4846. E-mail: earthfirstupdate@apc.org. Enclose a SAE for replies. Send us your details if you want to subscribe to the free e-mail server.

Earth First! Website address: <http://www.earthfirst.org.uk/earthfirst/earthfirst.html>

THE NEW DEAL

The New Deal is part of Labour's attempt to reduce unemployment and is based on the ethos that everyone must work to survive regardless of their situation. It has been criticised for its crude imposition of work discipline on claimants and has been compared to the USA welfare system in its coercion of the unemployed into working for an income which is on or below survival level.

THE PROCESS

From January 1998 the New Deal will be piloted in 12 Pathfinder areas and goes UK-wide in April 1998. Under 25's unemployed for over 6 months will be undergo a series of interviews - the Gateway - a 'job guidance and counselling' programme lasting 2 to 4 months. This will basically increase the hurdle given to people signing on - they will be expected to "clearly examine their employment options" and will be subjected to several interviews. Over 25's will be subjected to the same process although they will have to have been unemployed for more than 2 years to enter Gateway. Full details of the policy for over 25's are not yet clear. The aim of the Gateway period is to put 40% into an unsubsidised job or education - all others will be forced into one of four options. Claimants who refuse or fail will be required to take up a place identified for them by the Employment Service. If they refuse or fail to take up this there will be no option of continued full benefit - sanctions will be applied.

THE OPTIONS

1. The employment option

A 6 month job with a private or public employer, with one day per week training. The employer gets a £60 per week subsidy and is supposed to pay a standard wage - suggested £90/week minimum. After the 6 months employers can replace these subsidised workers with other subsidised workers. The aim is to place 40% of scheme participants into this option.

2. The voluntary option

Working for a voluntary organisation for 6 months, paid benefits plus the equivalent of £15 per week. One day per week training. (13% target for this outcome)

3. The environmental task force option

Same conditions as voluntary sector. Similar to community service but with a few extras to disguise this. A glimmer of light under this option is that it may be possible for local recycling co-ops, resource centres, etc to be part of the consortium running this option and thus create relatively sane placements for campaigners. (22% target)

4. The education option

On existing benefits. Only available for those lacking NVQ level 2. (25% target)

Placement length can vary, in Manchester, for example, placements will be for 12 months. The number of options available can also vary: in some places the voluntary sector and the Environmental Task Force are being combined into one option.

Throughout time spent in one of the options the focus will be on getting or maintaining a job in the regular labour market after the New Deal period. The later stages of each option will therefore include intensified mentoring by the Employment Service.

THE REALITY CHECK

Labour promises monitoring will take place to ensure that employers don't just replace jobs with New Deal workers or use them to fill naturally occurring vacancies - however this is happening in a context of falling wages and employers seeking any excuse to introduce low paid casual work. The New Deal can only intensify this process by providing cheap labour for employers, undermining wages and conditions and replacing current going rate jobs with underpaid concepts. Sainsbury is planning to recruit up to 1000 young people on the New Deal; Tesco will guarantee interviews to all New Deal candidates; Liffewoods Home Shopping Division is working to incorporate the New Deal into all future recruitment planning.

Redf and Marpower recruitment agencies will actually work in Job Centres, processing claimants through the Gateway and finding placements. This has been criticised as the thin edge of eventual Employment Service privatisation. As far as claimants are concerned this means they will be dealing, not with ES staff, but with employees of a private recruitment company with an entirely different set of priorities.

The voluntary sector will also be hit - if it becomes accepted that the voluntary sector should depend on part of its workforce being unemployed people on schemes, then the case for adequate funding for sufficient staff paid decent wages is undermined.

RESIST SOCIAL CONTROL

Contact your local Groundswell group or Edinburgh Claimants, c/o Peace and Justice Centre, St John's, Prince's St, Edinburgh. 0131 337 6242

SEND US YOUR NEWS!!

We can't tell you if you don't tell us. Send your news, stories, posters, addresses, quotes, leaflets and up coming dates on the back of an envelope, A4 sheet, computer disk or email to EF!AU. Don't forget pictures, (as photos or graphics files,) or drawings



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WHAT IS EARTH FIRST?

Earth First! is not a selective group or a campaign team. It is a movement for people who share a similar philosophy to work under. The general principles behind the name are: non-violence, respect for the use of direct action to confront, stop, and eventually reverse the forces that are responsible for the destruction of the Earth and its inhabitants. The above contents are autonomous groups that consider themselves to share these principles. International contacts are easy people into that country's own network of groups. Other contacts are ones whose aims and principles are ones that we agree with fully or in part, or groups that we think may be of use or interest to people. New additions or alterations are shown in bold.

ORGANISE THE EARTH FIRST! SUMMER GATHERING

There will be a preliminary organising meeting for anyone interested in organising the next Earth First! Summer Gathering (ideally at least one representative from each EFG group). Most by 12 noon on Saturday 28th February at Cornerstone, 16 Sholdbrooke Avenue, Chapelwau, Leeds LS6. For directions telephone 0113 262 9365 or e-mail: corstone@nigeln.org. An association will be provided - bring telephone bills and access money for food. The next EFG groups that are represented the better it'll be.

KINGSTON MAKING WAVES

Making Waves, formerly known as the Sea Saks, chartered up the river Thames to appear at the camp at Kingston in West London. A railway bridge spanning the Thames was the first target - a "Save Our Trees" banner was suspended with two attention-drawing balloons hanging underneath. The police arrived in a total of seven cars and started chasing the boat up the river.

Making Waves supported the Kingston camp again when four activists and Father Christmas scaled the front door of the Lib Dem HQ in Westminster to display a "Trees not Steats" banner. The trees that Making Waves were referring to are being cut to provide veneer of the river for a housing development. Contact five camp on 0181 287 3118 or Making Waves on 01404 81100.

SHELL CONFERENCE DISRUPTED

Nitrogenous FP activists strapped Shell by sealing flag poles and lamp posts outside a nitrogenous hotel housing a Shell conference. Shell death heads and banners reading 'Sole not Oil' were displayed for both delegates and passers-by to see. These were ripped down by security staff but the group had already moved on to the next stage of their plan with 4 Earth Firsters getting into the conference and raising questions about Shell's involvement in Nigeria, and their contributions to global warming.

The activities led to a quest while Shell's plans for the UK were put forward, including "We want to create a world called Select, a world that revolves around shopping and driving". Shell are also offering the reassuring tones of "What we are saying to you, is trust us".

HOT SPRING 98

In mid-December activists from across Europe, Russia and Nigeria, held an ASERD gathering where they rallied to the EU summit focusing on globalisation and corporate social responsibility. The gathering was successful in creating a 'global action festival'. The message 'No Spring' was floated - political activism to confront the centralisation of power by TNCs in the next 6 months. They also discussed the power surrounding People's Global Action (PGA) one of the events that will be held in March, during the MAI in April 08 and WTO in May, and EU Summit in June in the UK social planning is full swing. Contact Corporate Watch, Reinstate The Statute and Magnifying Bill (see contacts).

FANTASY FOOTBALL

Rescuers in Sri Lanka and Sri Lanka GPs' teams took over a pre-arranged part of City Road in London in December for an unofficial game of football. Drivers were quite patient after an initial struggle to turn the game into a more serious one, but the police arrived after about 20 minutes - just as the first-half whistle went - and helped to remove the goal-posts. Meanwhile, oranges were being handed out to the players. One to football involving the grab the 2nd half was postponed. Tired to coincide with the half-way point of the Sri Lanka Conference in Japan, the game was cancelled. A few days later, the Sri Lanka players (the Sri Lanka team) also played a game of football in the Sri Lanka team, playing with a football passed to resemble the Earth.

The 'glide' football match marked the last day of the RTS/Sinkas Oil occupation and rehabilitation of a damaged petrol station. This had been transformed into a petrol-fired garage with banners, murals and art installations as well as various activities - cycle demos, blue-powered parties, 'kai' days - and a daily community cafe. Contact: 0171 281 4621 midnight@pc.org

POLICE SAY SORRY...

The police have apologised to local councillors for their behaviour at the Oxford street party on November 1st. The meeting was arranged after pressure from the local Green Party. The police asked them to withdraw their official complaints in return for the apology, which the Green councillors refused to do until the police made the apology publicly in a local newspaper. The police have promised to use their video tapes from the day to identify those officers who forgot to put their numbers on, and those who had a "heavy attitude", which they now admit was inappropriate for what should have been a peaceful protest.

EVENTS

JANUARY

Stop down Millgrove Farm (at Winsey), and
bushes for collection call 0128 873 4440

FEBRUARY

21 West County planning. Workshops, planning and party. For info or to offer workshops, contact 24331 313488 or fax 311-0101. 184

23 - 25
 Joining is essential to platform for worldwide
 action against trade liberalization, the People's
 Global Action (PGA) against "Free" Trade and
 the WTO. Geneva. Contact Play Fair Europe!
 +49-241-80 21 92 email: playfair@post.rolf-
 schaefer.de

MARCH

7-8 Zapatos Challenge Conference, a roll in activism in the UK and around the world to confront neoliberalism and support the continuing struggle of the Zapatos in Mexico. Price: £200, Post 30, London E2 (Railroad Green Tube station). Contact: 0114 2765675, or Mexico Support Group 0181 443 3403.

[4] Birmingham City Centre Cycle Rally. Mass ride of the Birmingham roadway to support cycling, and pay up to the planned Birmingham Northern Relief Road. Meet Chatterboxes Square, city centre.

04-23 Counter Globalization Network gathering
Learning about and planning around CE systems
World Trade Organization, Multilateral
Agreement on Investment. Contact 0161 22
4516

28 • 29 **Miss Trepanier** in commemoration of the Digger Meeting Saturday, 12 Monday like most diggers mystery can (no dig) Food & entertainment to avoid and importance in a piece of land followed by a meal—on a road on Sunday. Two good food tools, meetings and nightingale food, history and experience. The last is (the first will have meeting place about 10 February) and the others will be as a consequence from the Saturday evening celebration. 12210 or 0402 776410 e-mail: miss.trepanier@nsw.gov.au

APRIL

11 The first ever Diggers' Day commemoration - on the day the Diggers colony began a group will be going to St George's Hall to commemorate the 140th anniversary of Woburn's settlement.

3-5 Gathering Wisdom, Gathering Strength I
Manchester University. A weekend gathering
bring together diverse activists from different
movements and generations to explore some
changes and how we can do it! Contact 234-6181
E381

MAY

8 Reclaim the Streets in Birmingham city centre
9 Whitechapel Reclaim The Streets - more info
to follow. Contact c/o Watney Gas Action (a
Contact Ltd)

(3) (f) Oil leasing. Bernierghers. Multinationals under the control of the 4 most powerful industrial nations. Details 1999.

CAMPS

Also featured were: **11004 534902**

Adams Court Quarry - 848T 8003003

Dingley rd/air road (between the fish spring) - E1274
504436

Birmingham Northern Relief Road - 0797 8081978
 Newark Road, in Ferry St, Edmonds - 01159 246065 or

Student Press Camp • 814.664.4090

Question - 08174 176718

Hammington Life Science Laboratories - 8599 834439

Exhibe aquí - E117 5379449

Tubby Boat bypass camp - 0000 221414

LEGAL DISCLAIMER: The editors of the Earth First! Action Update do not intend to encourage anyone to carry out any illegal action. The Action Update is for informational purposes only.

SHOTGUN MADNESS

On the 6th of December, 5 Finnish ALP activists targeted a far farm in an attempt to spray the terrified fence with an harmless Henna dye. This was the fourth time the farm had been visited. The alarm system woke up the farmer who was after them with a shotgun. Three of them were shot, Elina Salonen was hit in her lower back, Jari Puumonen was hit five times on his arm and leg, and Jari Seppälä was hit 9 times, one of them hitting his lungs. They all escaped in a car but were arrested by the police and were subsequently taken to hospital. The farmer, Markku Kujawa was arrested for 'aggravated assault' (not attempted murder). The five were charged under 'aggravated breach of the peace' and were remanded for three days. Elina hasn't been released yet after four weeks and is on hunger strike. For more info letters of support LVR TR, PL40), (0195) Jämsä, Finland

ZAPATISTA MASSACRE

On 23rd December 42 men and women in Acatlán, a community in Peñón in the Zapatista Autonomous Municipality, Chiapas, Mexico were gunned down by a paramilitary group. The massacre followed 7 months of mass fanned violence against communities supporting the Zapatistas.

In May last year paramilitary groups, armed with AK-47's and backed-up by the state police, began displacing the unarmed men, women and children of communities in the Peñón municipality. These have been 14 communities displaced to date. There are currently 8,800 refugees in 3 camps in Peñón.

Their possessions and land have been sold and their homes burnt. Many of those who failed to escape have been killed, others are still in hiding in the mountains without shelter or supplies. The camps are suffering from severe shortages of food, water, shelter and medicines and children are dying.

Approx 2,400 people are reported to be unable to leave their communities and attempts to rescue these have been prevented by the armed paramilitaries. Harassment of their communities continues and the Zapatistas and their supporters are requesting international aid.

See Events listing for Zapatista Challenge Conference on 10th March, contact Mexico Support Group on 0161 682 7403.

PRISONERS

2 year prison sentences have been handed out to each of the 'GANDALF 21' for reporting on drug action. The 3 were found guilty of 'conspiracy to incite persons unknown to commit criminal damage'.

Sanna Wood (CR4322), HMP Winchester
Ramsey Road, Winchester SO32
Steve Booth (CR4323), HMP Prison 2
Ribbon Lane, Preston, PR1 5AB
Paul Melland (CR4321), HMP Gays
Marsh, Shaftsbury, Dorset SP7 0AH

11 years for carrying out arson attacks on mental inmates, increased and escaping from police custody during annual liberation activities.

Keith Mason (E57598) HMP Long Lartin
South Salsbury, Exeter, Devon EX6 6LL

Manchester Airport: EPI activists are on several facing serious charges in relation to the Manchester airport campaign (ap for trial end January). John Davies (see that if executed, he might be made into a Category A prisoner).

John Davies (CH4529) Ian Williamson (CH5067), HMP Alcatraz, Humber
Liverpool L9 7LH

Mr Fred Rob Connolly of Dr. Thomas's Hosp. (London) has been awarded the Free World War Veterans Foundation (FWVF) and

proprietor of a Glensburgh Hosp (who was imprisoned early January for seven days for "wild non-payment of tax and costs") for the possession of 1.57 grams of cannabis.

The Judges were not sympathetic to Fred Rob's cause. Fred Rob's statement included "Connolly is a plant that has served humanity for thousands of years, providing as well as four hair needs of food, fibre, fuel and medicine. I cannot pay this fine as this would show my support for this physically and morally bankrupt law." Contact: 01456-813769 e-mail: connollyfr@gl.gov.scot

TURN YOURSELF IN

First arrests at a cannabis farm 'Turn you in' happened at the beginning of the 1st or 14th December. About 160 people were arrested by two sets of police who piled up to large trucking individuals. One man who had been hiding out tobacco cigarettes approached a policeman and asked to be arrested for possession and assault but was refused because 'tobacco is not a controlled substance'.

The crowd then went to hand themselves in 'their crime' but the police suggested that 'they might have something better to do. It was suggested that they should turn themselves in to the police. It was then that they were something better to do than being people for using cannabis, such as arresting people whose crime has a victim.

The police brought out riot forces and said that if people really wanted to be arrested, they would be happy to accommodate them. A campaigner put words to this effect to the crowd but in doing so he was arrested for breach of the Peace and taken to a police van. A photographer was then arrested 'for not having a badge'. Further arrests took place but only one activist was charged with Possession of Cannabis, even though he didn't have any. He is charged with possessing an unspecified amount at an unspecified place in Leeds on an unspecified date in 1997. The only evidence against him is that he says it's true! Watch out Bill Clinton.

Contact: Cannabis Legalisation Action Group, PO Box 8994, Leeds LS5 1YJ. E-mail: leaflets@bmail.com

XANADU-DU-DU...

There's a lot of people in the world who are unemployed (DO Appro of James, called as the last largest indoor service complex). If you are interested in doing a hand ring 01442-513702 supervised elevators needed: food and shelter provided.

DON'T TRUST A DUTY SOLICITOR

Activists arrested at the office occupation after the Doe Hill Openness action in October have been charged with Aggravated Trespass (section 48 CrA) and stopping work (section 241 of the labour relations act). Unfortunately much of the case against them will probably come from the interviews and statements they made in the police station so they could get out that night, (as advised by the solicitor). He forgot to remind them that they were probably giving 'evidence that may be used against them in a court of law'. Remember kids, in best to say, "No Comment".

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